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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: REPLY : ESTONIA ON ARAB LEAGUE SUPPORT FOR LEBANON

REF: A. A. STATE 52061

[1](#)B. B. TALLINN 174

[1](#)1. (SBU) The Department appreciates Post's inquiry as to how best to encourage the Estonian MFA to increase its engagement in the Middle East, in particular in Lebanon and Syria. Estonia's prior work in Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova and Kosovo provides it with excellent credentials to promote democracy and market reform.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Past engagement with Syria by European Foreign Ministers has been unproductive. If any engagement must take place, the Department strongly prefers that European Union High Representative Javier Solana be the sole point of contact for the European Union with Syria. Interlocutors are encouraged to desist from senior-level travel to Syria unless there are direct humanitarian reasons compelling such travel, and are also encouraged not to invite Syrian officials to travel to their home countries.

[1](#)2. (SBU) With respect to Lebanon, we encourage host governments to provide tangible political, economic, and security support to the democratically-elected Government or its March 14 majority coalition in Lebanon and to ratchet up pressure against the Syrian regime and its proxies. Host governments should support the United Nations Special Tribunal for Lebanon and condemn political violence. The Special Tribunal will help bring to justice those responsible for the February 14, 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

Economic assistance can be offered in the form of grants and support to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) or Internal Security Forces (ISF).

[1](#)3. (U) For additional guidance, please contact NEA/ELA Matthew Irwin at 202-647-1058 or IrwinMT@state.sgov.gov.
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